

This Tuesday, April 17, is the deadline to mail or email your 2011 federal income tax return to the IRS. If you're like most people, you've been cutting back on personal spending to make ends meet and just once you'd like to know that Washington is doing the same with your hard-earned cash. Wouldn't it be nice if our leaders even acknowledged that they are spending too much?

The House of Representatives hears you loud and clear. We know millions of Americans are foregoing extras and even giving up some of the basics just to pay their bills. We've taken that spirit of sacrifice to heart in the passage of a new budget plan that cuts federal spending by \$5 trillion over ten years, compared to President Obama's 2013 budget proposal.

The House Republican budget is a serious first step that takes on the president's overspending agenda, and it repeals Obamacare. Clearly, the president isn't happy with our budget cutting. Two weeks ago he said: "This new House Republican budget, however, breaks our bipartisan agreement and proposes massive new cuts in annual spending – exactly the area where we have already cut the most."

Some say we should do more. We agree. However, you cannot erase an average trillion dollar annual federal budget deficit and \$15 trillion in national debt in one year. This colossal mountain of red ink took years to accumulate and will require more than 12 months to bring back under control.

The House-passed "Path to Prosperity" budget, written by Budget Committee Chairman Paul Ryan, R-WI, is the only serious plan to pass either body of Congress that addresses the looming debt crisis facing our nation head-on. The president's budget increases spending by \$1.5 trillion over ten years and imposes a \$1.9 trillion tax increase. Meanwhile, the Senate hasn't passed a budget of its own in nearly three years.

For the second year in a row since Republicans became the majority in the House, we've passed a budget that begins the process of cutting federal spending and each time the president has demonized our proposals. On April 3, he delivered a lengthy political speech attacking our latest conservative budget plan as draconian and extreme. Yet he has no meaningful budget strategy of his own except to keep on spending.

There's no doubt that Americans' frustration about Washington's overspending is only matched by their disappointment at the partisanship and inability to get things done. To this end, House Speaker John Boehner has repeatedly called upon President Obama and Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid to join us in a serious discussion to address the overspending. However, these requests have fallen upon deaf ears. We will continue to press for the enactment of a responsible budget even if the president and the Senate refuse to join us.

Become a Citizen Cosponsor:

House Republicans have begun a new program to allow the American people to share a greater role in the legislative process through social media.

The newly-unveiled Citizen Cosponsor program allows you to follow particular bills of interest to you and receive updates on their status as they move through the House. All that is required to sign up is a Facebook account.

To watch an on-line video explaining the new Citizen Cosponsor program, visit the web site: <http://majorityleader.gov/CITIZENS/>.

Washington Tours:

Each year, many Alabamians contact my office seeking tickets for Washington, DC public tours including the White House, Supreme Court, Library of Congress, U.S. Capitol, and U.S. Bureau of Printing and Engraving. While I do my best to accommodate every request for tour tickets, timing and other factors, such as scheduling issues at the tour locations, sometimes prevent requests from being approved.

Spring and summer are particularly popular times to visit the nation's capital and advance planning is essential if you want to reserve a tour at our national landmarks. In addition to requesting your tour tickets well in advance of your DC trip, you are reminded that all tickets are

subject to approval by the tour site. My office does not have final say.

Due to Secret Service requirements and high tourist demand, you are encouraged to make White House ticket reservations six months in advance. For all other tours, you should contact my office four to six weeks ahead of your DC arrival date.

You are welcome to contact my office at the toll-free number below to inquire about Washington, DC public tours. You may also visit my web site and click "Constituent Services" in the masthead and scroll down to "Washington Tours" for more information about which tours are available. Many sites do not require tickets.

My staff and I work for you. If we can ever be of service, do not hesitate to call my office toll free at 1-800-288-8721.

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